

EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Cardin says bill would prod states to clean up Chesapeake

WASHINGTON POST Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.) said Monday that he will introduce legislation to punish states that lag in cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, adding a regulatory hammer to a process that has let several deadlines slide by. Cardin announced the bill in a news conference along the bay shore near Annapolis, saying later that the bill would be the most important new policy for the Chesapeake in 25 years. In that time, governments have spent billions on the bay but have not significantly improved its health. "It puts teeth in the goals for cleaning up the bay," Cardin said. "If this bill was passed and funded, I think I would be very confident . . . we would really make significant progress." The ideas in Cardin's bill are similar to those in the Obama administration's plans for the Chesapeake, announced last month. Both aim to make the bay a national laboratory for cleaning up pollution, by attacking water contaminants with the same legal tools that have helped clean the nation's air. Specifically, the proposals borrow a legal framework from the Clean Air Act, which requires state and local governments with too-smoggy air to file plans for reducing pollution. If the Environmental Protection Agency judges the plans to be inadequate, the governments must revise them or face a threat of losing some federal funds. Under Cardin's bill, computer models would be used to figure out how much pollution needs to be cut to restore the Chesapeake's health. Those reductions would be parceled out to states, which would have to file plans for meeting their goals, two years at a time.

New push planned to clean up bay

BALTIMORE SUN Governments would have more power, funding to attack pollution, but deadline would be 5 years later. Maryland politicians and others gathered on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay near Annapolis Monday to announce a new push in Congress to restore the troubled estuary by giving state and federal governments more power and funding to clean up pollution from farms, cities and suburbs. But in a bid to win more support, sponsors of the legislation have agreed to a five-year delay in the deadline for states to do their part. Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin said the bill he helped draft and plans to introduce today would put the bay cleanup on a "realistic but aggressive path." Rep. Elijah E. Cummings plans to introduce similar legislation in the House. Cardin and Cummings, both of whom are Democrats, Gov. Martin O'Malley and others held a news conference at Sandy Point State Park. An earlier draft of the bill, which would have reauthorized the Chesapeake Bay cleanup as part of the Clean Water Act, had called for all restoration efforts to be in place by 2020, five years earlier than the deadline state and federal leaders had set for themselves when they met in May to review the lack of progress. Cardin said the delay was "an accommodation" to leaders of the bay restoration effort, who had agreed that 2025 was a "reasonable target date." O'Malley has pledged that Maryland would work toward meeting the earlier date, if possible. The bill would give states more authority to regulate polluted runoff, while providing more than \$1.5 billion in new funds to help pay for controls on urban and suburban storm-water pollution. Such runoff from

developed and developing land is a growing source of nutrients degrading bay waters. It also would provide for a market-based system of trading nutrient pollution credits. The bill drew praise from environmental groups, who said that after 25 years of only limited progress, it would hold the states and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency accountable for enforcing strict limits on pollution.

Manchin seeks 'balance' from EPA

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Gov. Joe Manchin repeated Monday his charge that a federal crackdown on mountaintop mining permits was "beyond cruel," but the governor also presented a more nuanced position on environmental regulation and suggested the state is ready to move away from its dependence on extraction industries. "If it is doing too much harm, maybe we should stop doing certain things," Manchin said. His comments came after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's announcement Friday that it was planning to revoke a permit for what was set to become the largest surface mine in Appalachia, the Spruce No. 1 Surface Mine in Logan County. An Arch Coal subsidiary was issued a water quality permit by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to mine the 2,300-acre site in early 2007, although a court fight has held up mining there. The governor on Monday repeated criticisms of the EPA, saying the agency was acting capriciously at best by reviewing permits that had seemed ready for approval. But he also called for "balance" from regulators. On one hand, he suggested environmental "agency gurus" and bureaucrats were going further with mining regulations than President Barack Obama would if he had "the total facts." Manchin said he expected eventually to have a meeting with top White House officials, perhaps including the president.

Editorial: Global again: Pittsburgh is the place for World Environment Day

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE Another ray of international recognition will soon shine upon Pittsburgh. Even as the city basks in the sunny attention of the G-20 summit, civic and corporate leaders said Thursday that Pittsburgh will host World Environment Day for North America on June 5. The U.N. General Assembly established World Environment Day in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, considered a watershed event. Then as now, the goal is to further environmental action and attention. It did not escape the attention of those present for last week's announcement at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh that the same truths that made the city a good, if surprising, choice for the G-20 also apply to its selection as a host for World Environment Day: The place that re-invented its economy after the collapse of the steel industry also reclaimed its environment -- the sooty city became green. Those who won this honor for the city deserve its thanks, especially Bayer Corp., which spearheaded the effort. This region has talked for years about how to shed its outdated "Smoky City" reputation -- and World Environment Day 2010, with events that won't be limited to a single day, presents a fresh opportunity.

Groups worry about DEP cuts

STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES The timing appeared awful. On Oct. 9, as the state Department of Environmental Protection dealt with highly publicized chemical spills in the booming Marcellus Shale gasdrilling region, Gov. Ed Rendell signed a state budget that cut more than \$58 million from the agency's 2008-09 spending level of \$217.5 million. A neighbor of the site where the spills occurred, Jim Grimsley, said, "It just seemed a little odd to be cutting at this time." But the cuts at the DEP "while significant" might have a minimal effect on the agency's ability to monitor the Marcellus Shale phenomenon. DEP Oil and Gas Bureau staff are paid from a special fund, separate from the department's general fund, according to spokeswoman Teresa Candori. The special fund has been swollen by higher oil and gas permit fees that let the DEP to hire 37 new Oil and Gas staffers, increasing the number to 98. Patrick Henderson, the executive director of the state Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, said the fee increases and other factors mean that "with regard to oil and gas specifically, there is more money, more staff, more enforcement and more inspection capabilities than ever before." Nonetheless, the potential scope of the cuts at the DEP worries environmental groups.

Lehman Twp. residents express gas drilling concerns

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE LEHMAN TWP. - The potential for natural gas drilling in the Back Mountain is raising concerns about the effects it could have on the environment and township infrastructure. Some Lehman Township property owners have already signed leases with Denver-based WhitMar Exploration, Supervisor Chairman Dave Sutton said, but added that he did not know how many. No natural gas drilling has begun, but township officials expect it to happen. "We had discussions with people from WhitMar. We know they're going to be coming sooner or later," Sutton said. The supervisors are worried about roadway wear and tear caused by trucks transporting water to and from the sites. Natural gas drilling uses a procedure called hydrofracturing or "fracking" in which highly pressurized water is injected into shale formations deep underground, to release the natural gas. The process can use more than a million gallons of water, which becomes contaminated with minerals, salts and other chemicals and has to be disposed of. Resident Chris Miller said although he is not opposed to natural gas drilling, he is concerned about what it could do to the area if not properly planned. He is worried it could contaminate the environment, particularly unspoiled wetlands like he has on his property. The marsh is a haven for herons and bitterns, among other species, he said. Miller said he was in Dimock Township, Susquehanna County, recently, and saw gas company trucks "barreling" down the highway. He asked if these trucks could be kept away from roads in residential neighborhoods, particularly those with many children. The supervisors told Miller they shared his concerns. However, township officials don't have much control, because natural gas exploration and drilling is regulated by the state. Municipal officials cannot tell the gas companies not to drill: like cell towers, it's something that has to be allowed, Sutton said. Invasive species brought in by drillers is what Jack Hanish of the Lake Silkworth Protective Association fears. He cited an October 4 article in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette about toxic golden algae that wiped out fish in a 35-mile swath of Dunkard Creek on the West Virginia border. The golden algae may have been accidentally imported on equipment used in Marcellus Shale drilling.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

Letter: Gas-drilling article missed the mark THE PUBLIC needs accurate information to understand how natural-gas drilling operations may affect Pennsylvania's water quality, but ProPublica's Oct. 16 article in the *Daily News* uses outdated and erroneous data, and out-of-context quotations from 6-month-old interviews to paint a very misleading picture. DEP has taken steps to protect the state's waterways by doubling the number of oil and gas inspectors, inspecting all Marcellus Shale drilling sites, issuing violation notices when needed and shutting down operations when the law is repeatedly broken. There are also 13 monitors measuring total dissolved solids along the Monongahela River, another point ProPublica ignored. DEP ordered municipal water-treatment facilities to cut the amount of drilling water discharged to the Mon by 95 percent in October 2008. In August, DEP unveiled regulations that will significantly reduce TDS discharges. These restrictions are being written into new permits now and will go into full effect statewide on Jan. 1, 2011. Developing the Marcellus Shale is a huge opportunity for the state, but there are real challenges in doing it right. Relying on facts, sound practices and strong enforcement is key to addressing these challenges. The public can be assured that as more and more wells are drilled to capitalize on our abundant natural-gas resources, DEP will remain vigilant in protecting the state's rivers and streams.

John Hanger, Secretary

Department of Environmental Protection, *Harrisburg, Pa.*

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Blog: Green Living: Big suckers: Electronic devices Okay, so the Halloween connection is about as hokey as it gets. In fact, I can almost feel myself gagging. But what the heck: Vampire power sucks, as they say, and any time something comes along to help people kick the habit of keeping all those power-draining devices plugged in, Iâ€™m for it. So welcome to a new website: www.VampirePowerSucks.com, which is the brainchild of iGo, a company that develops eco-friendly chargers and power management systems. The problem is that in most homes, even when

you think an electronic device is turned off, itâ€™s probably not. In reality, itâ€™s little electronic brain may still be humming along. Itâ€™s still remembering settings, noting the date, at the ready for an internet connection, ever on the alert for a signal from the remote. Researchers say that the typical house has three dozen appliances that never really shut down. Want to explore? Look for anything with a little red light. Thatâ€™s the first clue. Look for anything with a touch pad, a digital display, a remote control.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Editorial: Global again: Pittsburgh is the place for World Environment Day Another ray of international recognition will soon shine upon Pittsburgh. Even as the city basks in the sunny attention of the G-20 summit, civic and corporate leaders said Thursday that Pittsburgh will host World Environment Day for North America on June 5. The U.N. General Assembly established World Environment Day in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, considered a watershed event. Then as now, the goal is to further environmental action and attention. It did not escape the attention of those present for last week's announcement at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh that the same truths that made the city a good, if surprising, choice for the G-20 also apply to its selection as a host for World Environment Day: The place that re-invented its economy after the collapse of the steel industry also reclaimed its environment -- the sooty city became green. Those who won this honor for the city deserve its thanks, especially Bayer Corp., which spearheaded the effort. This region has talked for years about how to shed its outdated "Smoky City" reputation -- and World Environment Day 2010, with events that won't be limited to a single day, presents a fresh opportunity.

'Green jobs' supported at Senate hearing held here Clean energy and the "green jobs" attached to it enjoyed wide support in testimony at a U.S. Senate hearing in Pittsburgh yesterday, but differences remain about how and how quickly federal policies should push those goals. Sen. Arlen Specter, D-Pa., who hosted the hearing, acknowledged those tensions between "competing interests" in Pennsylvania coal, natural gas and alternative energy industries as the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee began work on legislation titled "Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act," introduced earlier this month. Michael Peck, North American spokesman for Gamesa USA, a Spanish wind turbine manufacturer with factories and 850 employees in Pennsylvania, urged establishment of a national standard mandating 12 percent renewable energy by 2012. That would send a strong message to investors and boost demand and job creation, he said. "We're predicting a 40 percent drop in new wind projects this year and the recession has crippled demand. Our factories are idle," Mr. Peck said. "The U.S. is at the brink of losing manufacturing jobs to India and China and implementation of a near-term renewable energy standard would send a strong message and would do the most to boost demand."

Pickens says interest in energy plan growing More than a year after introducing a grand scenario for reshaping America's energy infrastructure and breaking the proverbial addiction to oil, Texas oil billionaire T. Boone Pickens is still trying to get the rest of us to see what he sees. And he thinks he is making progress. First, he said more than 1.6 million people had signed up on his Web site to join the New Energy Army. Second, he is being invited as a speaker, at \$125,000 per appearance, to talk about his singular focus, the Pickens Plan. He said he has done 26 town meetings, and received standing ovations at 23 of them. "I think I'm getting the attention of the people," he said from Dallas in a phone interview last week. On July 8, 2008, Mr. Pickens unveiled the Pickens Plan, described in a news release as "a sweeping, innovating plan to address the national energy dependence crisis."

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Amtrak recommends new train Amtrak is recommending that another train be added to the sparse service between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, if state and federal legislators decide the additional ridership is worth the expense. In a study mandated by the federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, Amtrak officials looked at passenger service in Pennsylvania and decided that the potential riders and revenue were sufficient to consider increasing the Pennsylvanian route between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg from one train per day in each direction to two, adding a midday departure from Pittsburgh and a late-night arrival that could connect to trains heading west to Chicago. "The ridership was there, and it would have a minimal impact on operations," said Steve Kulm, Amtrak spokesman. "If this is going to move forward, state and federal legislators will have to make the next step."

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

Lehman Twp. residents express gas drilling concerns LEHMAN TWP. - The potential for natural gas drilling in the Back Mountain is raising concerns about the effects it could have on the environment and township infrastructure. Some Lehman Township property owners have already signed leases with Denver-based WhitMar Exploration, Supervisor Chairman Dave Sutton said, but added that he did not know how many. No natural gas drilling has begun, but township officials expect it to happen. "We had discussions with people from WhitMar. We know they're going to be coming sooner or later," Sutton said. The supervisors are worried about roadway wear and tear caused by trucks transporting water to and from the sites. Natural gas drilling uses a procedure called hydrofracturing or "fracking" in which highly pressurized water is injected into shale formations deep underground, to release the natural gas. The process can use more than a million gallons of water, which becomes contaminated with minerals, salts and other chemicals and has to be disposed of. Resident Chris Miller said although he is not opposed to natural gas drilling, he is concerned about what it could do to the area if not properly planned. He is worried it could contaminate the environment, particularly unspoiled wetlands like he has on his property. The marsh is a haven for herons and bitterns, among other species, he said. Miller said he was in Dimock Township, Susquehanna County, recently, and saw gas company trucks "barreling" down the highway. He asked if these trucks could be kept away from roads in residential neighborhoods, particularly those with many children. The supervisors told Miller they shared his concerns. However, township officials don't have much control, because natural gas exploration and drilling is regulated by the state. Municipal officials cannot tell the gas companies not to drill: like cell towers, it's something that has to be allowed, Sutton said. Invasive species brought in by drillers is what Jack Hanish of the Lake Silkworth Protective Association fears. He cited an October 4 article in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette about toxic golden algae that wiped out fish in a 35-mile swath of Dunkard Creek on the West Virginia border. The golden algae may have been accidentally imported on equipment used in Marcellus Shale drilling.

LANSDALE REPORTER

Hatfield Meats seeks to up sewer capacity TOWAMENCIN - Hatfield Quality Meats wants to purchase additional sewer capacity at the Upper Gwynedd-Towamencin Municipal Authority. Dan Little, chair of the township's board of supervisors, read the request at last week's meeting.

STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

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Cousteau hopes land lessons offer clue Jean-Michel Cousteau, son of famed ocean explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau, has spent much of his life traveling through "and diving into" the Pacific, the Atlantic and other bodies of water across the globe. To him, it's all one ocean

As snow melts, storm cleanup continues PATTON TOWNSHIP - Allison Albinski awoke early Friday morning to the sound of a tree crashing into her roof.

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

Funds set for water evidence efforts An environmental group, stockpiling water samples as future evidence against natural gas drillers, just doubled its money. The Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Management Committee, a group of governmental representatives from Pennsylvania and New Jersey, voted unanimously at its meeting this month to add another \$25,000 grant to the existing \$25,000 project to collect water samples across Nockamixon Township. The latest grant is funded through the National Park Service. The samples will serve as evidence if the Upper Bucks community's groundwater is poisoned during the gas drilling process. It's a unique approach, said the committee's Pennsylvania chairwoman Nancy Janyszeski, who also serves as Nockamixon Township supervisor chairwoman, noting that if a township or homeowner suspects that nearby streams or water wells might have been poisoned, there is usually little proof. Environmentalists say the potential for contamination comes with the mix of chemicals and water that is injected into the rock thousands of feet below ground. After the natural gas is extracted, the chemical-laced wastewater is collected in a lined pit and disposed of by the gas company. Janyszeski cites last month's Dunkard Creek incident as just one example of why there are concerns about drilling's potentially negative effects. The stream that winds along the West Virginia-Pennsylvania border in Monongalia County was the scene of a 30-mile fish kill.

Rival turtles play shell game for survival Dogs and cats aren't the only ones being abandoned at area parks. In Nockamixon, pet shop turtles are squeezing out the threatened red-bellied species. Abandoned dogs, cats and even ferrets have become a sad mark of a struggling economy in the past couple of years. Family canines, which once ate kibble from a dog bowl and napped on the couch, face little chance of survival against coyotes, cold temperatures and the overall harsh conditions of living deep in Nockamixon State Park's woods and nearby state game lands after they are left by an owner who can no longer afford to care for them. "They're really not doing it any favor by dropping it off here," said Nockamixon State Park Manager Obie Derr. Any domestic pets found by rangers are given to the SPCA and other rescue shelters. But it's the abandoned pet store turtles that have surprisingly caused the most problem in Nockamixon State Park. For years, turtles that get too big, live too long or are no longer an interesting pet for a young child are frequently tossed along the park's lake shore. "They're relatively aggressive and long lived. People don't flush turtles down the toilet like they do goldfish," said Brendan Ryan, waterways conservation officer for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

HAZELTON STANDARD SPEAKER

New fill meets safety standards Material used to reclaim a mine pit in a demonstration project at Hazleton's amphitheater site would meet the same standards as fill delivered there the past three years, a developer said. William Rinaldi of Hazleton Creek Properties LLC and his consultant, Mark McClellan of Evergreen Environmental, said they proposed the project while searching for material to reclaim the 277-acre site. "We basically asked the question: What is out there that is safe as regulated fill - a dry, inert material that could present a beneficial material to expedite the reclamation?" McClellan said Monday. They proposed using a fine material reclaimed from construction and demolition sites, which they displayed in a jar. The material is gray and contains pebbly pieces. In an application to the state Department of Environmental Protection, Hazleton Creek proposed using the fine material as part of the fill for a 60-acre pit on the property. The project will test whether the fine material can be used as mine fill statewide when mixed with regulated fill or dredged material. Mixtures of the materials also will be tested to determine if they can be compacted sufficiently to support buildings such as restaurants and stores that Mayor Lou Barletta envisions opening near the proposed amphitheater. While the proposal is a research and development project, Hazleton Creek said the fine material would be tested to the same standards as regulated fill now brought to the site. Regulated fill includes soil, rock, stone, concrete, used asphalt, brick and block, and the company also has used material dredged from waterways as fill since starting to reclaim the property in 2006. Dredged material became scarce after Hazleton Creek entered a contract with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to remove some of the substance stored along the Delaware River at Fort Mifflin in Philadelphia.

POTTSTOWN MERCURY

This little bug is causing a big stink The Halyomorpha Halys has landed. And it has caused quite a stink. While you most likely know the creature by its more common name, the brown marmorated stink bug, there's little doubt you know it has invaded southeastern Pennsylvania by the millions. Actually, you may have just vacuumed up a few. The

stink bug has become a major nuisance in the area, driving homeowners to distraction looking for ways to rid their homes of the pesky creatures. The bugs are especially annoying at this time of year, when they are rapidly moving away from the out-of-doors cold toward the warmth and comfort of local homes. According to Steve Jacobs, a senior entomologist with the Pennsylvania State Cooperative Extension Service, we shouldn't plan on saying good-bye to the stink bug anytime soon. "Every year since we first discovered them here, the extension service has been getting more and more phone calls about the stink bug. This year was probably the worst so far, which is not surprising since the bug is still moving into areas, including as far west as Portland. "In areas where the bug has become established, it is spreading out and becoming more numerous," Jacobs said. The bug, a native of Japan, gets its name from the pungent odor released from its scent glands whenever it feels threatened. Unfortunately, the bug's other major quirk is the production of an antifreeze-like chemical that keeps it alive in cold weather.

Letter: Does quarry firm care as much about area as township does? A couple of months ago, I attended a meeting of the Lower Milford Township Zoning Hearing Board. At that meeting, Geryville Materials (GM) forwarded a Special Exception application to build a stone quarry, asphalt plant, and concrete factory on 600 plus acres in Hosensack. When GM's attorney was asked to clarify the company's reason for the application, I was somewhat surprised at his answer. He simply replied that he had to apply to develop his client's land as a reaction to the new zoning ordinance that was recently adopted by the township. Lower Milford Township officials have the wisdom and good judgment to try to protect their pastoral community from intrusive development. And they showed their willingness to spend the time, effort, and money to adopt a new, more protective zoning ordinance. They deserve high praise for what is often a thankless job. Well done!

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Beach repair funding chopped Delaware came up short this year in the annual grapple for federal beach replenishment funds, a victim of a sharpening debate over taxpayer spending to repair the ocean's ceaseless attacks on shorelines. A compromise energy and water bill awaiting President Barack Obama's signature makes \$2.3 million available to the state for all projects -- about \$2 million more than the White House originally requested, but far short of the amount needed to start any high-priority sand-pumping jobs. "It's not a number we can go to construction with," said Anthony Pratt, administrator of shoreline and waterway management for the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. "It's a number that allows us to do some monitoring and planning, and then in 2011 we'll have another request and a year's worth of revisions." Nationwide, Congress approved \$103.7 million for rebuilding beaches, with \$20.7 million going to New Jersey and \$14.3 million to Florida. In recent weeks, Delaware's congressional delegation has won spending-bill terms that earmark \$969,000 for beach protection work in the Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach area and a matching amount for Bethany Beach-South Bethany. Another \$331,000 was approved for the Delaware Bay shoreline between Roosevelt Inlet and Lewes Beach. But needs in Delaware alone could total as much as \$43.8 million, according to Marlowe & Co., a Washington lobbying firm that closely follows beach nourishment issues. Spending was blocked partly by the Obama administration, which has nevertheless been more open to considering subsidies to rebuild beaches than President George W. Bush. Many in Congress, however, are completely hostile to the idea.

\$1.2 million in fines and cleanup charges for Claymont firm A former Claymont fuel and tire business faces more than \$1.2 million in fines, cleanup bills and related costs for a decades-old spill that remains a headache for some residents along Hillside Road near Philadelphia Pike. Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control officials reported plans Monday to update the neighborhood on Oct. 27, while also making plans for a public hearing on actions taken against the former business, Ron's Discount Energy Mart, Ron's Discount Tires, and its owners. DNREC Secretary Collin O'Mara recently ordered Penny Hill Mobil Inc., Ronald C. Palimire and related businesses at 2509 Philadelphia Pike to pay a \$447,125 fine -- one of the highest DNREC sanctions ever imposed on a local

business -- along with cleanup and investigation costs. Officials with the business have refused to accept responsibility for the problem or cleanup and have requested a hearing, according to the agency. The penalty document identifies Penny Hill, Palimire and the Ron's businesses as responsible for a tank leak that sent petroleum vapors into basements and a county sewer line in 1988. The fumes and contaminated groundwater eventually forced the relocation of residents in one home, and years of work to halt and control the spread of tainted groundwater and hazardous vapors.

UD partners on coastal wind turbines The first wind turbine to go up off the Delaware coast might not be a generator in the Bluewater Wind project after all. On Monday, officials of the University of Delaware and Gamesa, the world's third-largest wind-turbine manufacturer, signed a contract that signals the parties' intent to build a small offshore wind research project -- with perhaps one or two turbines -- in the Delaware Bay off Lewes in 2012. The contract also contains an agreement to build a 2-megawatt, land-based turbine on UD's coastal Lewes campus next spring. Both parties will use the turbine for research -- the university for conducting academic work and Gamesa to develop offshore technology. Jeremy Firestone, a UD associate professor and one of the project's organizers, said the contract is the first time a wind-turbine supplier has agreed to provide its product for a U.S. offshore project. "It represents an important and innovative partnership between a dynamic wind-energy company and the university" for research, teaching and developing clean energy, Firestone said. That doesn't necessarily mean the project will be the first U.S. offshore wind turbine, he said. Small projects in state waters off North Carolina, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, as well as in the Great Lakes, might get in the water first, he said.

Commentary: It's time for the Delaware Environmental Institute Delaware has a fragile coastal ecosystem, a long history of industrial production and agricultural land under pressure from increasing residential and commercial development. As a consequence, the state faces a range of environmental challenges: Excess nutrients have resulted in algal blooms and fish kills in waterways; particulate release has polluted the air; climate change is contributing to a rise in sea level and marshland decline; industrial activity has contaminated the soil; and a growing population requires the redevelopment of urban brownfields. At the same time, Delaware is in an ideal position to pilot research strategies to address these issues. The First State has a track record of effectively identifying, prioritizing and acting on difficult issues and valuable opportunities, and its small size and constancy of purpose enable effective communication and issue resolution among key stakeholders. The environmental issues facing the state are too complex to solve by traditional means. They demand innovative applications of science, engineering and public policy and collaboration with outstanding researchers who are conducting cutting-edge and highly relevant environmental research. The need to utilize this talent and foster collaboration led to the creation of the Delaware Environmental Institute (DENIN), a multidisciplinary institute focused on providing solutions to global environmental problems by coordinating environmental scientists, engineers and policy experts to help address complex environmental issues. Working in partnership with each of the constituent colleges at the University of Delaware and other institutions of higher learning in the state, state agencies and the K-12 school system, DENIN aims to add value to current efforts in research and student training and to reach out to the community, state and federal agencies and nonprofit groups.

CAPE GAZETTE

Residents want Plantation Road to remain residential Plantation Road residents reaffirmed their position that their neighborhood should remain residential during a Tuesday, Oct. 13 county council public hearing. Several residents opposed a medical-professional office complex proposed at Plantation and Cedar Grove roads and Postal Lane. They espoused the same message during a Sept. 24 planning and zoning public hearing. The commission deferred action at that meeting, but on Wednesday, Oct. 14, it voted unanimously to recommend approval of the conditional use to county council. Developer Todd Bariglio is seeking a conditional use for a 4.7-acre parcel at the intersection of Cedar Grove and Plantation roads to build the 45,000-square-foot Ocean Park Business Campus. He first sought to rezone the parcel to B-1 neighborhood business district, but when that application was opposed, Bariglio changed course and applied for a conditional use.

WASHINGTON D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

Cardin says bill would prod states to clean up Chesapeake Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.) said Monday that he will introduce legislation to punish states that lag in cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, adding a regulatory hammer to a process that has let several deadlines slide by. Cardin announced the bill in a news conference along the bay shore near Annapolis, saying later that the bill would be the most important new policy for the Chesapeake in 25 years. In that time, governments have spent billions on the bay but have not significantly improved its health. "It puts teeth in the goals for cleaning up the bay," Cardin said. "If this bill was passed and funded, I think I would be very confident . . . we would really make significant progress." The ideas in Cardin's bill are similar to those in the Obama administration's plans for the Chesapeake, announced last month. Both aim to make the bay a national laboratory for cleaning up pollution, by attacking water contaminants with the same legal tools that have helped clean the nation's air. Specifically, the proposals borrow a legal framework from the Clean Air Act, which requires state and local governments with too-smoggy air to file plans for reducing pollution. If the Environmental Protection Agency judges the plans to be inadequate, the governments must revise them or face a threat of losing some federal funds. Under Cardin's bill, computer models would be used to figure out how much pollution needs to be cut to restore the Chesapeake's health. Those reductions would be parceled out to states, which would have to file plans for meeting their goals, two years at a time.

Shell wins federal approval to drill for oil off Alaska coast The Interior Department has given Shell approval to drill oil exploration wells in two leaseholds in the Beaufort Sea, which could lead to the first drilling in more than a decade in this area off the north coast of Alaska. Shell Alaska general manager Pete Slaiby hailed the decision as "another positive step towards the ultimate goal of drilling in 2010." But environmental groups criticized the move. "There is no safe way to drill in the Beaufort Sea," said Athan Manuel, director of lands protection at the Sierra Club. "Cleaning up an oil spill in the Arctic's broken sea ice is next to impossible, and where there is drilling, there are oil spills." He said a spill could threaten polar bears and bowhead whales.

Pranksters stage Chamber of Commerce climate change event Will the real U.S. Chamber of Commerce please stand up? Environmental activists held a hoax press conference Monday morning, pretending to be the business group -- and pretending to announce that the chamber was dropping its opposition to climate-change legislation now in Congress. The event, complete with fake handouts on chamber letterhead, at least a couple of fake reporters, and a podium adorned with the chamber logo, broke up when a spokesman from the *real* chamber burst in. What followed was a spectacle not usually seen in the John Peter Zenger Room at the National Press Club: two men in business suits shouting at one another, each calling the other an impostor and demanding to see business cards. "This guy is a fake! He's lying! This is a stunt that I've never seen before," said Eric Wohlschlegel, an official at the actual Chamber of Commerce, who said he'd heard about the hoax event from a reporter who'd mistakenly shown up at the chamber's headquarters. The fake Chamber of Commerce official, who called himself "Hingo Sembra," did not give his real name to reporters, saying only that he represented a coalition of climate activists. He appeared, by comparing photos on the Internet, to be a member of the activist-prankster group called The Yes Men. They have staged several hoaxes to draw attention to what they believe is slow progress in fighting climate change. The group's last big stunt was to print fake copies of the New York Post last month during a U.N. climate conference, bearing the headline "We're Screwed." Asked if he was one of The Yes Men, he merely said, "Who?"

ABC's 'V' is for vastly polluting PR stunt (TV column) The next time ABC and its parent company Disney start thumping their chests about how they're "going green," please spit in their eye and remind them of Monday's announcement that the broadcast network will dispatch a fleet of skywriting planes in 15 cities around the country over 12 days to write large ominous red V's over U.S. landmarks -- all to promote a four-episode sampling of a science-fiction series that is reportedly already having problems. Cities being subjected to the Why The Face

campaign: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Seattle, Minneapolis, Orlando, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Las Vegas, Dallas, Austin, Tempe, Ariz., and Santa Monica, Calif.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Blog: Reclaiming and developing the mountains Iâ€™m usually a little wary when I hear that my buddy Tom Loehr is involved in an economic development project â€¦ my skepticism goes back to a long way, though, to when Loehr thought that putting a big coal-fired power plant near downtown Morgantown was a good idea. So it was interesting to read last week that Loehr is working with the good folks at the Mingo County Redevelopment Authority to bring a new wood waste-fired power plant on an old mountaintop removal site.

Blog: National Academy blockbuster: Coalâ€™s huge hidden costs Coal industry lobbyists and coal-state politicians like to remind us that coal is a relatively cheap source of energy. But in a major new report out today, the National Academy of Sciences details some of the huge â€œhidden costsâ€ of coal: More than \$62 billion a year in â€œexternal damagesâ€ â€” that is, premature deaths from air pollution.

Blog: Coal protesters headed for Gov. Manchinâ€™s office The folks from Climate Ground Zero announced this morning that a group of anti-mountaintop removal protesters are headed for Gov. Joe Manchinâ€™s office today. They plan to deliver a letter to the governor, and apparently some of them will refuse to leave until Manchin agrees to their demands. Their demands? Theyâ€™re outlined in this letter, and include rescinding mountaintop removal permits for the Coal River Valley area.

Blog: Manchin to protesters: Balance â€™toughâ€™ in â€™extractive stateâ€™ West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin came out and met with about two dozen protesters who filled his outer office reception area, demanding that the governor step in to stop Massey Energy mountaintop removal operations near the companyâ€™s Brush Fork slurry impoundment in Raleigh County. The governor told the protesters: *We want to do everything. Weâ€™re committed to attracting wind farms and attracting solar farms. Weâ€™re looking at all of that. What weâ€™re trying to do is find a balance and thatâ€™s tough to do in an extractive state.*

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Manchin seeks 'balance' from EPA CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Gov. Joe Manchin repeated Monday his charge that a federal crackdown on mountaintop mining permits was "beyond cruel," but the governor also presented a more nuanced position on environmental regulation and suggested the state is ready to move away from its dependence on extraction industries. "If it is doing too much harm, maybe we should stop doing certain things," Manchin said. His comments came after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's announcement Friday that it was planning to revoke a permit for what was set to become the largest surface mine in Appalachia, the Spruce No. 1 Surface Mine in Logan County. An Arch Coal subsidiary was issued a water quality permit by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to mine the 2,300-acre site in early 2007, although a court fight has held up mining there. The governor on Monday repeated criticisms of the EPA, saying the agency was acting capriciously at best by reviewing permits that had seemed ready for approval. But he also called for "balance" from regulators. On one hand, he suggested environmental "agency gurus" and bureaucrats were going further with mining regulations than President Barack Obama would if he had "the total facts." Manchin said he expected eventually to have a meeting with top White House officials, perhaps including the president.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.) W.Va. lung association against power line proposal CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) -- The advisory board to the American Lung Association of West Virginia has voted to oppose a

planned multistate power line. In a letter to the state Public Service Commission, the board urged the PSC to reject the line because its construction would only serve to continue the nation's reliance on coal-fired power plants. The board said it is concerned for those living downwind from such power stations who suffer from respiratory problems. Allegheny Energy and partner American Electric Power are proposing to build the 765-kilovolt Potomac-Appalachian Transmission Highline, or PATH, from AEP's John Amos plant in Putnam County, across parts of northern Virginia, and end at a substation near Kemptown, Md. PSC decision on the line isn't expected until next year.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

New push planned to clean up bay Governments would have more power, funding to attack pollution, but deadline would be 5 years later. Maryland politicians and others gathered on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay near Annapolis Monday to announce a new push in Congress to restore the troubled estuary by giving state and federal governments more power and funding to clean up pollution from farms, cities and suburbs. But in a bid to win more support, sponsors of the legislation have agreed to a five-year delay in the deadline for states to do their part. Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin said the bill he helped draft and plans to introduce today would put the bay cleanup on a "realistic but aggressive path." Rep. Elijah E. Cummings plans to introduce similar legislation in the House. Cardin and Cummings, both of whom are Democrats, Gov. Martin O'Malley and others held a news conference at Sandy Point State Park. An earlier draft of the bill, which would have reauthorized the Chesapeake Bay cleanup as part of the Clean Water Act, had called for all restoration efforts to be in place by 2020, five years earlier than the deadline state and federal leaders had set for themselves when they met in May to review the lack of progress. Cardin said the delay was "an accommodation" to leaders of the bay restoration effort, who had agreed that 2025 was a "reasonable target date." O'Malley has pledged that Maryland would work toward meeting the earlier date, if possible. The bill would give states more authority to regulate polluted runoff, while providing more than \$1.5 billion in new funds to help pay for controls on urban and suburban storm-water pollution. Such runoff from developed and developing land is a growing source of nutrients degrading bay waters. It also would provide for a market-based system of trading nutrient pollution credits. The bill drew praise from environmental groups, who said that after 25 years of only limited progress, it would hold the states and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency accountable for enforcing strict limits on pollution.

Stadium Place water tested for Legionnaire's disease Water samples were taken by state officials from more than 100 locations during the weekend in an attempt to identify the source of last week's outbreak of Legionnaire's disease at Stadium Place, a senior living facility on the former site of Memorial Stadium, a Baltimore City health spokesman said Monday. The spokesman, Brian Schleter, said there have been no additional reports of illness from the outbreak, which has sickened four and killed one.

Smith urges road, transit projects in Baltimore County While saying he recognized the state's fiscal problems, Baltimore County Executive James T. Smith Jr. pushed for several critical highway projects and upgrades to mass transit during a meeting with Maryland transportation officials Monday. Road and highway maintenance "remains essential both to the quality of life in our communities and to helping us to rebound and promote economic growth," Smith said. While making annual visits to each jurisdiction, transportation officials are delivering the same message: Only projects already under construction will be funded, while all others are deferred. "There is nothing in the budget for expansion," said Jack Cahalan, spokesman for the transportation department. "Our focus is on preserving infrastructure, while we weather this economic downturn." A large portion of the state transportation revenues comes from the vehicle title tax, which has dropped along with auto sales. That loss of funding has affected operating costs and long-planned capital projects, officials said. "We are not seeing an end to the recession in terms of revenue," said Beverly K. Swaim-Staley, transportation secretary.

Blog: Baltimore marathon collects tons for recycling The numbers from the Baltimore Running Festival are in from the folks at Corrigan Sports: --They collected 3.7 tons, or 7,440 pounds, of single stream recycled items such as bottles. --They collected 1.1 tons, or 2,020 pounds, of compostable items such as cups and banana peels. That's a lot of trash diverted from the landfill. They say they are happy with the numbers, which will serve as a baseline for future festivals. The efforts to collect the refuse from some 20,000 runners were aided by event sponsors Aquafina, which offered bottles that uses 50 percent less plastic at the event, and Under Armour, which handed out race shirts to participants that were made from 100 percent recycled materials. They were also aided by a big group of volunteers and everyone who participated in the day's events: a marathon, half marathon, 5K and relay. Pretty amazing that people can run that far and still manage to toss their cup in the right bin. So, did you help the effort? Think they labelled the bins well enough? What should the organizers do next year?

Blog: Don't flush your old prescription drugs Those who flush their old prescription drugs down the toilet may think they're safely disposing of the drugs. But studies show the pills end up in area waterways and in our drinking water. That means fish -- and humans -- are getting antibiotics, hormones, antidepressants, pain relievers and goodness knows what else in their systems that they don't know about. The Carroll County government is among the few area jurisdictions that plans on collecting the drugs for proper disposal. A quick check didn't reveal any Baltimore area government collection sites but Montgomery and Prince George's seem to hold at least periodic collections. The government is among the few area jurisdictions that plans on collecting the drugs for proper disposal. A quick check didn't reveal any Baltimore area government collection sites but Montgomery and Prince George's seem to hold at least periodic collections.

Blog: A Cousteau in town Jean Michel Cousteau, son of famed undersea explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau, pays a visit to Baltimore on Tuesday. Now president of the Ocean Futures Society, Cousteau is scheduled to speak at 8 p.m. at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall as part of the Baltimore Speakers Series. Admission is via a subscription to the entire speakers series. For those who want to get a free preview, though, he will be speaking at 12:15 p.m. at Stevenson University's Inscape Theatre, 1525 Greenspring Valley Road, Stevenson, MD 21153. I interviewed Jean-Michel nearly 30 years ago, while a reporter in Norfolk, VA. The Virginia city had offered the Cousteau Society offices and dock space for *Calypso*, Jacques Cousteau's equally famed research vessel. The society still maintains its US headquarters in the Hampton Roads area.

Blog: Energy Star appliances may not be so efficient As we wait for the next program to encourage us to buy Energy Star rated appliances, the New York Times comes out with a story that says an Energy Department audit shows that the agency may not be properly tracking manufacturers who slap on the label. The report says that manufacturers are allowed to self label on washing machine, refrigerators and dishwashers. The label is suppose to insure that the products meet energy efficiency standards. Those manufacturers that make light bulbs and windows are required to get independent verification of efficiency. The Energy Department is looking into the matter. Hopefully the authorities will figure this out before the stimulus money gets handed out.

Blog: Baltimore's "greeners" honored Community "greeners" get feted on Wednesday (Oct. 21) at Parks & People Foundation's 14th annual Greening Celebration at the Inner Harbor. The event, to be held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, 701 E. Pratt St., also marks the 25th anniversary of Parks & People. The foundation has worked since 1984 to restore Baltimore's neighborhoods, expand and improve the city's parks and green spaces, notably the Gwynns Falls Trail, as well as engage youth in sports and the environment.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

Debris lingers after storm, some dunes damaged by erosion BETHANY BEACH -- A thick line of debris ---- reeds, wood, plastics and a few boats ---- littered the beach at Lewes on Monday as storm-driven waves and astronomically high tides started to recede. But the damage was far more significant further south in Bethany and South Bethany beaches. Anthony P. Pratt, the state shoreline and waterway administrator, estimated that a third of the protective sand dunes in the two communities was badly damaged during the two storm systems that came back to back over the weekend.

Town moves to annex 610 acres MILLSBORO -- The town is moving forward with plans to annex 610 acres of land, with the intention of retaining 438 acres as open space. Mayor Larry Gum said the town has been in negotiations to purchase the land for more than a year and is close to finalizing the deal. "It's expensive, but it's not a bad move," he said. "Once someone else gets a hold of it, it would be impossible to keep the land." The town and property owners, White Farm LLC, have not yet agreed upon the price. The land is located east of Route 113 along Hardscrabble Road, Gum said. A public hearing is scheduled for Nov. 7 to consider feedback from the community. Town Manager Faye Lingo said about 172 acres of the property would be zoned for medium-density housing, but no builders have been lined up. "This is just to get the annexation done," she said. "There are no plans for development yet." The annexation would ensure the land would be free from high-density housing, such as apartments and condominiums, or commercial development. "Open space is certainly always a plus for the county," she said. "And it's an area where there are already single-family homes." Gum said one potential long-term use for the land could be a 300 million gallon wastewater treatment and disposal facility. "With (limited) growth, there's no need to build it now," he said. "If the future comes to be, though, we'll have to expand."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

Cardin unveils federal Chesapeake restoration bill ANNAPOLIS -- Federal legislation to restore the Chesapeake Bay will create funding and incentives and mandate enforcement penalties if states don't meet restoration goals, Sen. Ben Cardin said Monday. "This is a major moment," said Cardin, the bill's co-sponsor, as he outlined the measure on a sunny, blustery day on the shores of the bay at Sandy Point State Park. The Maryland Democrat called the legislation the most significant advance for the Chesapeake Bay in the past 25 years. That drew agreement from the head of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, which has sued the federal Environmental Protection Agency over the slow pace of cleanup efforts. Foundation president Will Baker said the environmental group would look closely at the language of the bill and track the progress of restoration efforts, but he said foundation officials were pleased overall. Baker said the proposed bill "requires that actions replace words," and called it the most important bay legislation in the group's history. Cardin, who is co-sponsoring the bill with fellow Maryland Sen. Barbara Mikulski on the bill, said it will give states and local governments new enforcement tools and create a cap-and-trade pollution trading program designed to lower compliance costs and provide incentives for farmers. The bill comes as the EPA is also drafting a bay restoration strategy in response to an executive order by President Barack Obama earlier this year. Obama's executive order puts the federal government at the head of efforts previously led by the states. Cardin said the legislation re-authorizing the decades old Chesapeake Bay Program codifies Obama's order.

Environmental activist now a green developer BALTIMORE (AP) -- Stephen P. McAllister wants to build one of "the greenest projects to date in this country" on a sprawling plot of land straddling the line between South Baltimore and Anne Arundel County. The environmental activist-turned-developer got official blessing to acquire 98 city-owned acres next to the old Pennington Avenue landfill two months ago. He plans to merge that property with the adjacent acreage he already owns (250 acres in total), subdivide it and sell it off to one or several of the nation's A-list home builders -- he mentions Ryland, Lennar, and Pulte in the same breath -- to construct 1,500 units of market-rate housing, a project known as Glen Abbey. But all is not perfect with Glen Abbey. The project was approved over the loud objections of the South Baltimore Business Association, a trade group of about 30 industrial businesses, including local offices of CSX and Hess Corp., which operate pretty much in Glen Abbey's back yard. And according to officials from Baltimore's Department of Real Estate, the city was so enamored of McAllister's vision of renewal, converting contaminated brownfields into clean, green, productive tax base, that they knocked more than \$7 million off of the appraised value of the land they sold him, and didn't include a provision in the agreement compelling McAllister to clean up the supposed contamination on the land.

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT

Commentary: Dirtiest fuel needs more scrubbing

The issue Pollution control devices at coal-fired power plants generate new set of problems.

Where we stand U.S. reliance on a destructive energy source won't end soon, but it should be phased out. Coal will likely be a large part of the nation's energy portfolio for many more years, but Americans shouldn't lose sight of the fact that it's an immensely destructive way to generate electricity. Our long-term goal should be easing our dependence on coal as a power source, just as we need to reduce our reliance on other fossil fuels. Recently, there have been repeated reminders of how coal affects human health and the environment. A New York Times analysis of a surge in Clean Water Act violations, for example, found an egregious group of offenders "companies that extract coal by ripping the tops off mountains and dumping debris into streams and valleys below."

MISCELLANEOUS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

EPA: Indiana must rewrite BP refinery air permit INDIANAPOLIS -- Federal officials ordered Indiana on Monday to rewrite an air permit for BP PLC's Whiting refinery, concluding the state may not have fully assessed all the new emissions a big expansion of the refinery will produce. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's decision means Indiana has 90 days to conduct a new air emissions analysis and submit to EPA a revised air permit for the refinery, which is in the midst of \$3.8 billion expansion along Lake Michigan. Members of the five environmental groups who petitioned the EPA in August 2008 to review the permit declared the agency's decision a victory for Indiana residents, particularly those who live near the refinery about 20 miles southeast of downtown Chicago. "EPA recognizes what we've been telling BP and the state all along - this refinery expansion is clearly going to dump additional pollution on the surrounding communities, and the law requires BP to control it," said Ann Alexander, senior attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

UK's Brown warns of climate catastrophe LONDON -- The world has less than two months to agree on how to avoid catastrophic global warming whose impact would be felt for generations, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said yesterday, issuing a stark warning that puts pressure on the United States to finalize its position before this year's global climate conference in Denmark. (

VOICE OF AMERICA

Fish kills linked to water pollutants Since 2002 thousands of fish in the United States have died and continue to die in many rivers, most in the rivers of the southern east coast. Researchers have found what they call "the feminization of fish" or the presence of immature eggs in male fish. They have also found different levels of water contamination all related to human activity. The government says twenty percent of male black bass in river basins across the country have immature egg cells in their sexual organs. This is a different way of fishing. With electric shocks delivered in the water, all fish nearby rise to the surface, belly up. Rick Router is with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. "We are applying about 300 volts to the water at 6 amps. It doesn't kill the fish, it just stuns them momentarily," he says. The fish recover in a minute or two. But they don't live much longer, because the scientists test their blood and then dissect them. Here on the Potomac River, south of the U.S. capital, fish are being caught for complex analyses. It's part of a joint study between the states and federal government.